

THE DEAD CHILD.

Ernest Dawson in Atlanta.
Sleep on, dear, now.
The last sleep and the best;
And on thy bair,
And on thy quiet breast,
Vielets I tuck in.

Thy little life
Was mine a little while;
No other were life,
To trouble thy brief smile
With stress or strife.

Life still and be,
For everyone, a child!
Not gaudily,
Whom life has not defiled,
I render thee!

Slempers so deep
I would not maulch wake;
I hardly weep,
To sin only, for the sake,
To send thy sleep.

Yea! to be dead,
To sleep and let thee to-day;
When all is said,
Twere good to lie
My weary head.

That is the best;
Ah, Child, so tired of play,
I stand confest,
I, too, would come thy way,
And, somewhere, rest.

A CHARMING GHOST

"Sonnenchein will never marry. Sonnenchein is confirmed bachelor."

Such was the open confession of the male friends of Dr. Gotthold Sonnenchein, Professor of Philology at the University of Bonn, and it was always pronounced with satisfaction, for he had been regarded by all as little short of a calamity. With such a supercilious supper party would have been deemed complete.

Oh, it was a good thing to see him rise in his place on some special occasion, his deep-set eyes gleaming like will-o'-the-wisps, his whimsical face twinkling with suppressed humor. The company would hang on his lips in silent expectation to burst into a roar when out from its fantastic wrappings came the reserved joke which was to sweep down the barriers of decorum with its final thrust.

No wonder, therefore, that for the long vacation Sonnenchein was in great demand. He was besieged with invitations to join parties touring to every quarter of Europe; and, in accordance with strict custom, he was compelled to give up to him alone, as he had done when a lad along the banks of his beloved Rhine, we behold him leaving the deserted town with a knapsack on his back and a stout stick as his sole companion.

A few days later, on a sultry afternoon, he was ascending the hill which overlooked the stately castle of Rheineck. He walked slowly, hat in hand, often pausing to wipe his heated face, for the heat was oppressive. At length, at a bend of the winding path, he discovered a seat which, standing back in the shade of trees, invited him to rest, and with a sigh of relief he yielded to the invitation.

The level sun was shining in his face when he awoke with a murmur of voices in his ears.

"Tourists!" he muttered, and "Pottzhausen! I must have slept."

"This is your lot, sir," said a clear treble voice in an English tongue.

Now Sonnenchein understood English. He spoke it, too, in a style that was quite comprehensible to the enlightened Engländer.

"Ach-oh! Tauch you—my hat. Yes, it is indeed my hat, leetle mees. I tank you very much. And be beamed with a comical expression of amusement and pleasure on the small fairy at his side.

She wore a very short pink frock and had very long legs for her size. A round hat, like a pink mushroom, adorned her head, from under which fell a shower of golden hair. She was rosy with health and looked at him with forget-me-not eyes. Her hair was braided and adorned her immensely. "Ach-oh!" he ejaculated, and she tossed her sunny mane cometically.

"Are you going to the castle?" she asked, but without awaiting his reply. "We are," she continued: "that is, father and mother, and Jack and Jim, and, well, others. Father says we shall be too late. You think they will let us in when we get to the top?"

She looked up at the Professor's face in much anxiety.

He looked at his watch.

"So late!" he exclaimed. "We must, indeed, hasten."

"And they are crawling like snails!" cried the girl. "I will run back and hurry them to you."

"And I will speed me to acquaint the castellan of your approach."

"Please do. Tell her we are close behind." And she left him to resume the ascent with rapid strides.

In reaching the ten he found that the gate leading to the entrance court stood open. He mounted the moss-grown steps.

The old woman who acted as guide had just been showing a party over the edifice. She was turning the key of the half-studded portal. Sonnenchein approached her, and so adroitly did he do it that she did not even notice him.

Her friends she was graciously willing to accompany them. It chanced that the people leaving the castle were friends of the new arrivals, so that the Professor remained unnoticed.

As soon as the door was open he slipped into the shadowed way, away into the excited crowd he had passed him. Then, emerging from his hiding-place, he entered upon one of those exhaustive explorations which was his delight. He chuckled to himself at his cleverness in eluding the others for race at the tail of a troupe of children, headed by a pantomime guide, over a building that towers high above his interest, was to destroy all its charm for him.

After investigating the various rooms, he climbed the turret stairs and stepped out on the roof. The scene which met his view was one to be remembered. What wonder that, with his profound sense of the beautiful in nature, our Professor should forget the flight of time in his contemplation of it?

How long his oblivion might have lasted it is difficult to say, had not his eye chance on certain moving objects far below, on the hill side. A familiar pink mushroom bobbed in and out among them. It was the English people! They were almost at the foot of the hill!

As he stumbled hastily down the worn steps of the creaking staircase he wondered that he did not hear the cracked voice of the castellan calling to him; he felt that he deserved a reprimand for keeping her waiting.

The starting of the sleeve was explained when, on reaching the archway, he found that the portal was shut against him. They had either forgotten him, or taken it for granted that he had left the castle before them. It mattered not which. He was locked in! Now an ordinary person in such a situation would have at once begun to make a few ineffectual efforts. Not so Professor Sonnenchein. In a fit of dilemma he asserted itself. He first tried the door to make quite sure that it was locked, and finding that it was so, he calmly stroked his mustache, a droll smile flitting about his features. His sense of the ridiculous was touched.

Some travels far on a still evening. A few hard blows against the door with his stout stick would be heard in the adjacent restaurant, which was kept by the old woman.

He was lifting his stick to summon her, when a motion entered his view and adventures, and Sonnenchein was a very Don Quixote in his love of these elements.

Why should not he spend the night in the castle? It would be a unique experience, and interesting from a psychological point of view. What would be the sensations engendered by such a situation? The idea was extremely attractive, irresistibly. Though far from indifferent to creature comforts, he was willing and eager to sacrifice his supper and his comfortable bed as proof of the superiority of mind over matter.

When, fortified by this heroic resolution, he turned and re-entered the grand old hall, the subdued light of declining day faintly illumined it.

The dimmed and rusted armor on the walls scarcely reflected its rays. Where the shadows brooded, the linked suits of mail and grotesque visors looked like strange clinging creatures of a bygone world. The ragged banners hung motionless from the ceiling, like the pendant wings of sleeping bats.

Sonnenchein lingered here, taking in effects until it grew too dark to distinguish objects; then he once more mounted to the roof.

It was a relief to emerge into the sweet pure air, and leave darkness and the dead past behind. To the thin, pale, gaunt figure of the professor, men inspired the Professor with a feeling of exaltation. He observed the signs of cheerful life beneath him: the Rhine steamer with their freight of pleasure-seekers; the train pulling into Böhl, the main road dotted with vehicles and pedestrains; the red roofs of hamlets speaking of peaceful domesticity; and, over all, lay the warm soft tints from the glowing west.

A whirl of braving "hefted" ascending to his nostrils from the restaurant awoke him to the consciousness of a hungry stomach. He took out his case and lit a cigar, beginning slowly to pace the leaden floor.

His thoughts, however, were arrested by the appearance of a light of light that seemed to hang suspended in the summit of one of the trees to the left. He could not at first account of the castle was inhabited, and that the tree it: then it occurred to him that the light must proceed from one of the upper windows. They had told him at the inn that the wind

was occupied by an eccentric "Edelfraulein," whom no one ever saw. She was a postess.

Sonnenchein smiled now at the reflection, and there arose in his imagination a picture of the lady he had left so gay.

She was of the large-boned, hard-featured, strong-minded type of women. Her genius, he felt sure, would find expression in striking eyes. Of such a woman old doctor had once come in a gloomy castle, haunted by a host of ghostly associations. Weary at length with perambulating the root, he seated himself with his back supported against the projection of the low doorway.

In that attitude he must have dozed, for it surprised him to hear from near and far the clocks chime the hour of midday.

Meanwhile a light breeze had sprung up, so that notwithstanding the warm season, he felt chilled. The locality of a roof makes a somewhat too airy sleeping place, even in the height of summer. He scrambled up to his feet and took a few turns to relax his stiffened joints.

The light, he observed, still glimmered in the tree to his left.

"Ah! burning the midnight oil," he said aloud, with his whimsical smile. "No wonder that such talented ladies spoil their eyes and have to wear spectacles."

Precisely at the doorway he stopped, and gazed down into the black abyss.

"The watching time of night," he muttered.

"Thou must fortify thy heart, Gotthold, and descend to make acquaintance with the ghosts of the castle."

So down the action to the word, he groped his way down the winding stairs, which seemed imminent. At the foot black darkness enveloped him, and he was glad to avail himself of a few matches to light him along the passage.

As vulgar superstition can scarcely exist in a mind of high moral culture, not could his imagination admit of the supernatural, the professor wanted to believe.

The effect of the half-revelations induced by the moonbeams falling through the window-holes was weird in the extreme. He made mental notes of what he saw, and then, in the course of what followed, his mind receptive and imaginative.

Indeed, a fantastic winged creature flitted across the glimpses of the moon, his cool judgment pronounced it a bat; if it merely sounds broke the stillness, he told himself that they proceeded from rats.

Most of all did the lotty hall inspire him with admiration. The bright breeze entering by the open window-holes stirred the boughs as though with mysterious fingers. More than ever did the armor on the walls take the semblance of uncouth shapes, of unearthly things, clinging motionless, and watching him with dull, unwinking eyes. His pulses did not quicken at these phenomena, but he shrank and shuddered at them as potential dangers worth remembering.

Unable to tear himself away from so impressive a vision, just inside a huge chimney, from which he could survey it at his leisure.

Suddenly there broke on the stillness of the night a noise—a mysterious, inexplicable noise—that awoke him, and he started to his feet to find the old place with waves of sound that wailed and moaned like legions of lost souls.

Instinctively he crouched down and put up his arms under the impression that something was about to tumble on his head. However, the noise ceasing, and finding himself unharmed, he sat up and looked about him.

Practically Sonnenchein, as we have stated, had no belief in the supernatural, but how was he to account for what he saw? He had heard of optical delusions—he was the victim of one.

He strained his eyes and stared with all his might. Yes, it was there, and he was in perfect position, all his faculties intact.

A female figure was seen moving noiselessly along the end of the hall. She held a lamp aloft in her hand; its rays illuminated her features; they were transcendently lovely. Her large and brown eyes moved awfully from side to side as she advanced. She was dressed in a long white robe that swept the ground behind her. Her fingers, like dry twigs, hung down from her slender head to her waist.

"She is the personification of Faust's Gretchen," thought Sonnenchein, beginning to look with admiration.

The lighted cigar that he had held between his fingers shuddered forgotten at his feet.

All at once she stopped short, and her face seemed to assume an expression of astonishment which was wonderfully human. She smiled at him with a mischievous smile.

"Tante Hildegard will open her eyes when she sees you," observed Gretchen as they traversed the hall.

"My good aunt Hildegard keeps house for me."

At this sad announcement the tender-hearted Professor involuntarily pressed the little hand to his side. He clasped his companion's wrist, yet it gave him satisfaction to learn that she was as yet neither angry nor displeased.

"That is the sound which made me think that the place was trembling about me."

"You got a fright?"

"I was certainly startled, and still more so on seeing you, and I seen you with such delight in your eyes that you were truly radiant in the room, the fairest of all the maidens."

When she had taken him through, and was turning the grating key, he observed:

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